

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0014] with the following amended paragraph:

[0014] Preferably, the gripping members 50 are connected to a rack and pinion system 55 (Fig. 7) that moves the gripping members 50 from an open position as shown in Fig. [[5]] 6 to a closed position as shown in Fig. [[6]] 5. An electrically powered linear actuator 57 includes an output shaft or member 58 that shifts horizontally upon actuation of linear actuator 57. The output member 58 extends through an opening in an angle bracket 61, and angle bracket 61 is fixed to rack 56. Angle bracket 61 is positioned between stop members 59 and 60 of the output member 58 such that stops 59 and 60 contact bracket 61 and shift rack 56 horizontally upon actuation of linear actuator 57. Rack 56 extends through a guide 64 and teeth 63 of rack 56 engage a gear 65 to rotate a first gripper member 50A. A pair of gears 66 and 67 mesh to thereby cause gripper member 50B to rotate in an opposite direction relative to gripper 50A. When the output shaft 58 is in the extended position as illustrated in Fig. 7, gripper members 50A and 50B are rotated to the open position. As output member 58 is retracted, a spring 62 contacts the vertical wall 68 of angle bracket 61, thereby pulling the rack 56 towards the actuator 57 and rotating the gripper members 50A and 50B to the closed position. The spring 62 thereby provides a relatively constant, controlled force acting on the film between the gripper members 50A and 50B, and reduces or eliminates the variations in force that would otherwise occur due to varying thicknesses of the film and/or variations in the amount of travel of output member 58 of actuator 57. Other resilient members or arrangements providing a constant gripping force could also be utilized. For example, rubber or foam could be

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positioned on the edges of the gripper members 50A and/or 50B. The linear electrically powered actuator 57 is secured to a base member 71 by an actuator bracket 70, and gripping members 50A and 50B are rotatably mounted in brackets 69. The gripper housing 18 is preferably bolted into position on the ground by fasteners 73 or other suitable anchoring arrangements.